

a. Please amend the claims as follows:

17. (Currently amended) A procurement system for a buyer to purchase a desired item,

said system comprising:

a first catalog database accessible to said buyer lacking said desired item;

a second catalog database, wherein each unique catalog item stored within said second catalog is identified with respect to class relationships, attribute relationships, and value relationships; and

an item selection procedure, said procedure relying on said relationships to search for the desired item within said second database when it is not located within said first database.

18. (Previously amended) A procurement system as recited in claim 17, wherein each unique catalog item stored within said first catalog database is identified with respect to said class, attribute, and value relationships.

19. (Original) A procurement system as recited in claim 17, including:

a special requisition identifying the desired item prepared by said buyer using said class, attribute, and value relationships; and

a master database not normally accessible to said buyer including the desired item, said special requisition being used to search for the desired item in said master database.

20. (Original) A procurement system as recited in claim 19, wherein said special requisition is forwarded to a supplier who provides the desired item, one of said databases being updated with said desired item according to said class, attribute, and value relationships.

21. (Currently amended) A procurement system as recited in claim 17, wherein a parametric search engine performs said item selection procedure.

22. (Previously added) A procurement system as recited in claim 17, wherein said class relationships are hierarchical among classes.

23. (Currently amended) A procurement system as recited in claim 22, wherein the lowest class in the hierarchy is a leaf class and said attribute relationships ~~are between~~ is a leaf class ~~and~~ to an attribute.

24. (Previously added) A procurement system as recited in claim 23, wherein said attributes comprise static, differentiating, and dynamic.

25. (Currently amended) A procurement system as recited in claim 23, wherein said value relationships are between is an attribute ~~and~~ to a value of the attribute.

b. Please amend the specification by inserting the following new paragraph (corresponding to the text of original claim 19) before line 20 of page 15, i.e., before the last paragraph on page 15:

Therefore, the procurement process includes a special requisition identifying the desired item prepared by said buyer using said class, attribute, and value relationships and a master database 32 not normally accessible to said buyer 22 including the desired item, said special requisition being used to search for the desired item in said master database 32.